WEB BUSINESS PRACTICES

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PURPOSE: The objective of the Web Business Practices is to ensure that common business practices, ethics, and expectations on the world wide web are observed. Web Business Practices also adhere to the Treasury Internet Principles. Every content provider shall consider these when maintaining or establishing a presence on the web.

    E-mail Address: It is a common business practice to provide an E-Mail address for every content area on the web. A content area is a set of web pages maintained by one Treasury or bureau office. The customer expects to be able to send comments to every content provider. It is also common business practice to provide an E-mail address for the systems administrator of each web site. The systems administrator is the designated operational/technical contact for a web site, sometimes referred to as the webmaster.

    Responding to Comments: Just as with paper correspondence, it is an expected courtesy to respond to customer comments, even if this is no more than a standard acknowledgement of receipt.

    Currency: Web sites are expected to provide the most recent information available on a subject area. It is a common practice to provide the date that the site or content area was last updated on the home page and on every major content area.

    Responsibility: Web sites are available 24 hours seven days per week. It is a common business practice to post a notice for planned outages prior to the outage. Planned outages are scheduled during low traffic hours. Service providers are expected to support a site at all times of the day and night. Disaster recovery provision considerations are the same as with any automatic information system. Mirror sites are expected for sites with millions of accesses per day. It is common business practice to have a systems administrator and technical support for every site.

    Help: Web sites provide a help desk and/or help area, when web transactions involve invoking software other than that provided by most browsers.

    Audience: Content on a web site (unless restricted) is available world-wide, immediately upon release. It is common business practice to present quality information of substance. It is expected that a content provider will present source information that is of interest to the user community. While all web sites continually evolve, if a site is considered to be "under construction", it should remain unavailable to the user community until construction is complete.

    Software Use and Distribution: Use and distribution of any software must comply with the applicable software licensing restrictions.